Rescue Sauvetage
Coast Guard
Garde côtière
JOHN JACOBSON
OTTAWA

Canada

CANADIAN COAST GUARD SHIP JOHN JACOBSON

The Canadian Coast Guard Ship, JOHN JACOBSON, is named in honour of John Jacobson, one of British Columbia's foremost authorities on Vancouver Island's west coast native history and culture.

Jacobson was born in Ahousaht, just north of Tofino, on 16 September 1922. The native band he was born into, the Ahousaht band, is one of 14 bands that make up the Nuu-chah-nulth nation on Vancouver Island's west coast.

The Nuu-chah-nulth people are noted for their seamanship and seafaring traditions. They navigate by feel and by careful observation and this knowledge is passed down from generation to generation.

Jacobson inherited his love of native history and the sea from his parents. When he was a boy his mother and father would tell him stories about his ancestors hunting, whaling and fishing along the coast thousands of years ago. They also told him about the native villages that dotted the coast and about the families that lived in those communities. His father sailed on the sealing schooners that travelled up the coast as far north as the Aleutian Islands. When he returned from a voyage he would tell John the stories and teach him the songs of the native people he had visited during his travels. He passed his knowledge and his love of music to his son. John Jacobson never stopped listening and was always interested in an Elder's story. He quickly became an expert on the history of the Nuu-chah-nulth people and their family lineages.

During the 1950s and 60s he worked as a fisherman and a logger along the west coast. He also continued to travel extensively among the Nuu-chah-nulth bands, gathering and recounting the history of his people. In the 1970s Jacobson turned his attention to native politics and was elected to the Ahousaht village council. Later, he was elected to the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (NTC).

During the 1970s Jacobson took up two new vocations: carving and painting. He began carving detailed models of Nuu-chah-nulth canoes, masks, paddles and ceremonial rattles. One of his carvings sits above the entrance to the Ahousaht school where he taught carving.

His greatest gift may have been something very simple — the way he dealt with people. He gave each of the children in his village a nickname and the children were proud of the names. He also always had the time to sit down with an anthropologist or a young native person who wanted to discover the rich Nuu-chah-nulth history.

John Jacobson died in 1986 at the age of 64.

The Canadian Coast Guard Ship, JOHN JACOBSON, is stationed in Victoria and helps patrol Canada's 29,000 kilometre Pacific coastline. She carries a staff of five officers and eight crew members and is on the lay-day system with a crew change every 28 days. Although not a large ship, her endurance and seaworthiness make her ideally suited for search and rescue patrols in the rough waters off the west coast of British Columbia. She has a range of 2500 nautical miles and can stay at sea for more than a month before having to return to port for supplies.

The JOHN JACOBSON is specially-designed for search and rescue duties. Her stern launch ramp allows the ship's fast rescue boat to be launched and recovered in severe weather conditions. The fast rescue boat has a top speed of 50 knots and is constructed for search and rescue duties in rough and treacherous waters. Once a survivor has been rescued, there is a sick-bay aboard ship, fitted with advanced first aid equipment, to treat injuries. In an emergency, the JOHN JACOBSON can carry over 40 survivors.

The ship has state-of-the-art navigational and search equipment as well as a 400 horsepower bow thruster allowing the JOHN JACOBSON to manoeuvre in tight spots. She is also equipped with fire monitors enabling her to fight fires at sea.

Besides her search and rescue duties, the JOHN JACOBSON can be called on to service navigational aids in coastal waters and do pollution prevention work.

The JOHN JACOBSON is the second Type 500 Search and Rescue Class ship to be built. The first Type 500, the CCGS GORDON REID was christened in 1991 and also helps patrol the British Columbian coastline.

The JOHN JACOBSON was built in 1991 by Versatile Pacific Shipyards Inc. of Victoria. She is 49.95 metres long, 11 metres wide and has a draught of four metres. The ship can call on four Deutz six cylinder diesel engines to deliver a total of 4800 horsepower for a top speed of 16 knots or a cruising speed of 12 knots.

Naming and Dedication Ceremony

Commencement
1400 hrs. 8 May 1992, Ahousaht, B.C.

Chiefs' Welcoming Ceremonies

"O Canada"

Invocation
Reverend Bruce Gunn

Introduction of Guest Speaker
Captain Bill Dancer, Director General, CCG Western Region

Guest Speaker
Mr. Michael Turner, Deputy Commissioner, CCG

Prayers of Dedication

The Christening
Mrs. Joan Jacobson

Witness of Marking and Name Change
RCMP Corporal Don Fraser

Presentation of Ship Portrait to Mrs. Jacobson
Captain Ron Kerravala

Presentation of Gift to Ship
Mrs. Joan Jacobson

Benediction
Reverend Father Frank Salmon

Official Party Tour Ship

For further information contact:
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Painting: John Horton

TP No.11314E